



## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES NEW JERSEY EARLY INTERVENTION SYSTEM**

**Date:** July 1, 2009

No.: <b>NJEIS-16</b>	Subject: <b>Provision of Timely IFSP Services</b>
Effective Date: <b>Immediately</b>	Category: <b>Provider Agencies/Practitioners</b>
Review Date: <b>July 2011</b>	Responsible Party: <b>Part C Coordinator</b>

### **I. Purpose**

To ensure provision of timely early intervention services in accordance with the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP).

### **II. Policy**

- A. An early intervention service shall be initiated as soon as possible but no later than 30 calendar days of the parent's written consent for the provision of the service on the IFSP. This is in accordance with the federal Part C regulations at 34 CFR 303.344;
- B. Both the Service Coordination Unit (SCU) and the Early Intervention Program (EIP) have responsibilities to ensure the provision of timely services in compliance with the policies and procedures described herein;
- C. The SCU is responsible for ensuring each IFSP service is initiated within the 30 day required timeline including ensuring related policies and procedures are followed;
- D. The EIP is required to initiate a service, and notify the SCU of an actual start date of the service, as soon as possible, but no later than 20 calendar days from the assignment; and
- E. Future assignment of new services may be held for an EIP agency with outstanding start dates in accordance with the policies and procedures described herein.

### **III. Procedures**

Timely provision of early intervention services in accordance with the IFSP is ensured through the following procedures:

- 1. In accepting an assignment from the broadcast list, an EIP agency must ensure they can identify or ensure a practitioner will be available to provide services within 10-12 days of the assignment date.
- 2. The EIP is required to initiate a service and report an actual start date of the service to the service coordinator, as soon as possible, but no later than 20 calendar days from the assignment.

3. The SCU must have procedures to monitor the broadcast list at least weekly and as necessary, more frequently to ensure timely services.
4. The service coordinator must maintain notes that reflect the date and actions/steps the service coordinator takes to assign an EIP agency and ensure that children pending assignment (close to or longer than 30 days) in a specific county are not by-passed to respond to agency/practitioner preference or another child in the EIP catchment area recently added to the broadcast.
5. When an EIP is assigned to provide all IFSP direct services at the initial IFSP meeting, the assignment must be listed on the broadcast.
6. The SCU must ensure that the IFSP is forwarded to the EIP agency and REIC in a timely manner.
7. EIP agencies/practitioners have access to authorizations (view & print) through the Central Management Office (CMO) provider module.
8. If an EIP agency takes a child from a broadcast list and then finds they are unable to assign a practitioner, the child must be returned to the broadcast list immediately. A pattern of holding children for excessive periods (longer than 10-12 days) will result in an NJEIS inquiry about the agency's procedures and performance.
9. An EIP agency and/or EIP practitioner must maintain notes that document communication with a family to schedule the assigned services including reasons for delays in starting services as soon as possible. The EIP must notify the service coordinator when having difficulty making contact with a family.
10. If the service has not been initiated within 20 days of the assignment date, the EIP must submit a reason to the service coordinator. If the reasons for delay are other than family reasons, the SCU must return the child to the broadcast unless there are other extenuating circumstances. The EIP is responsible for maintaining written documentation for all delays.
11. If the EIP provides notice that the service initiation will be delayed for family reasons, including difficulty in reaching the family, the service coordinator must follow-up with the family.
12. If the service coordinator does not receive an actual start date from the EIP within 20 days of assignment, the service coordinator must contact the EIP to determine the status of the initiation of the service and when the actual start date documentation will be provided.
13. The SCU is authorized to hold and notify the EIP that future assignment of new services is pending receipt of a report on outstanding start dates. When the EIP becomes current with the required start date submissions, the SCU Coordinator will release the restriction on assigning new services to the EIP.
14. The SCU and the EIP must document all events and actions included in this policy and procedure and provide these upon request from the NJEIS state office.
15. SCU Coordinators and EIP administrators should periodically review notes of practitioners and service coordinators to ensure that adequate documentation is part of the child's early intervention record. Documentation must include all attempts and successful telephone contacts with the parents or caregivers.

## **NJEIS Timely Services Terminology**

### **Projected Start Date**

At the IFSP meeting, the IFSP team identifies and records a reasonable date to start services on the IFSP service page. NJEIS -09, Procedure #3 states that “Projected start dates for services on the IFSP should allow up to fifteen (15) days for assignment and processing of authorizations; however, the REIC may authorize services to start prior to the projected start date if a practitioner is available. A service start date shall not precede the effective date of the IFSP. (E.g., IFSP is dated for March 15, projected start date is March 30; if a practitioner is available on March 18 the REIC can authorize services to begin on that date)”.

### **Agency Assigned Date**

The date recorded by the service coordinator on the bottom of the IFSP service page that documents when an EIP agency is assigned to the IFSP service. This date will be used by the Department when conducting an inquiry on timely services and/or on any corrective action plan (CAP) implemented.

### **EIP Agency Received Date**

The date an EIP agency receives the IFSP service page from the SCU. This date must be documented by the EIP agency (e.g. fax transmission date, date/time stamp at EIP agency). The SCU must send the completed service page to the EIP agency as soon as possible.

### **Practitioner Assigned Date**

The date the practitioner is assigned by an EIP agency and recorded by the EIP agency on the service page. The EIP agency is responsible for transmitting the IFSP service page to the SCU and REIC as soon as possible after the practitioner is assigned.

### **First claim date/Start Date**

The first date the practitioner provided service as documented by a service encounter verification log and billed for payment. This must not be confused with the projected start date. It is the actual date of the first service delivered to the child and/or family.

### **Related Policies**

NJEIS-08: No Provider Available

NJEIS-09: Early Intervention Provider Assignment